STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF THE CIVIL–MILITARY GAP

BY

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ABSTRACT

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The civil-military gap that exists in America today has the potential to weaken the military element of our national power required to execute our National Security Strategy. Stated another way, the civil-military gap can weaken our national security. How the military sees its roles, responsibilities, and requirements for executing this strategy may be at odds with what the public believes the military's roles, responsibilities, and requirements to be. With the world relatively at peace entering the 21st Century, America will turn inward to deal with her domestic challenges. These issues and problems will be competing for limited tax dollars. With the world at relative peace, can America afford to spend less on defense in order to support or bolster other national issues? The extent and nature of the civil-military gap will certainly influence the debate and subsequent answer to this question. In this paper, I will explore the gap, determining areas where it exists. I will define the gap specifically between the military and the American people, and why it is important. I will finally make some recommendations on how senior military leaders can either narrow the gap or at least keep it from widening further.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Initially, this strategy research project began as just another requirement needed for graduation from the United States Army War College (USAWC). During the course of the research and writing, I found myself becoming more engrossed in the subject. In the end, I found that I was writing more to learn about the issues rather than to propose solutions. Reading to understand issues in one's mind is one thing; articulating your thoughts in a logical manner in writing is somewhat more daunting. In fact, I have more questions now than when I began. But the experience has been rewarding nonetheless and has challenged me to continue this quest for knowledge with future writing endeavors.

There are several people who have helped me in this quest for knowledge that have earned special recognition. I am grateful for the time and effort of four professionals whom to this day I have still not met face to face. The course of my research into the challenges of manning the Army logically led me to the US Army Recruiting Command (USAREC) at Fort Knox, Kentucky. Using the Internet, I left a request on the USAREC bulletin board. LTC Mark Young, from the Directorate of Program Analysis and Evaluation, answered my request. Mark spent more time than I thought I deserved discussing and sharing USAREC program concepts and strategies. He and Ms. Mary Baker from the same office took time from their busy schedules to compile and send current information. Questions Mark could not answer, he referred to his boss. COL Gregory Parlier was equally patient and accommodating, and even forwarded me unsolicited information he thought would help me on my expedition. The interest these gentlemen took in my subject matter reassured me I had picked a research topic of interest to a larger part of the Army. Likewise, Mr. Richard Lamance, from the Hometown News Service in San Antonio, Texas provided me the same type of response to my queries. I remain impressed by and thankful for the support all four of these professionals gave me.

For questions about Army officer accession challenges and strategies, I turned to the former Chief, Officer Branch at Headquarters Department of the Army, and one of my mentors, COL Anthony Stamilio. From his current office as a Brigade Commander in Germany, he filled in some of the blanks I had, referring me to his successor at Officer Branch, COL Karl Knoblauch for the most current status on accessions.

I am thankful for the efforts of Mr. Jim Hanlon from Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania. As my instructor for my USAWC elective course, "Writing for Publication," Jim volunteered his personal time to read this manuscript and offer constructive comments to make the document easier for all to read.

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Finally, I would be remiss if I did not thank my family—my bride Vicky, and children Jessi, Jason, Joey, and Sarah—for the patience and support they have provided during this quest for knowledge. It is not easy being the family member of a soldier and I am grateful for their love and understanding when soldierly duties take time away from them.

sdv
10 April 2001

UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF THE CIVIL-MILITARY GAP

The civil-military gap that exists in America today has the potential to weaken the military element of our national power required to execute our National Security Strategy (NSS). If left unattended, the civil-military gap can weaken our national security and affect our ability to meet our national interests. The negative consequences of allowing the gap to grow too large are many. How the military sees its roles and responsibilities and addresses requirements for executing the NSS may be at odds with what the public sees as or believes the military's roles, responsibilities, and requirements to be. Worse yet, the public may not agree that the military element of national power is appropriate for implementation of a given strategy—or it may initially agree, but subsequently withdraw its support at the first sign of problems. The width of the gap could negatively impact on the willingness to expend natural treasures—to include America's sons and daughters—to achieve policy ends.

The United States military is the preeminent fighting force on the globe, having no peer on the horizon through at least the year 2015.[1] The strength of our military has helped secure our role as the world's leader. The continuation in this role is envisioned by Gregory Foster:

> Ideally, the military would be a useful, useable instrument of national power that facilitates the attainment of the country's strategic goals, as well as a socially, politically, and economically responsible institution that contributes to the preservation and functioning of a civil society.[2]

But with the world relatively at peace at the onset of the 21st Century, the U.S. will turn inward to deal with her domestic challenges. Issues that dominated the year 2000 presidential and other electoral races included availability of prescription drugs, health care, social security, education, energy and the environment, and defense spending. These and other important social issues and problems will compete for limited tax dollars in the near future. With the world at relative peace, and with no military threat to the United States in the near future, can the U.S. afford to spend less on defense in order to support or bolster other more domestically oriented national programs? The extent and nature of the civil-military gap will certainly influence the debate and subsequent answer to this question.

The dynamics of the civil-military gap will play an important role in shaping the debate of our NSS and the use of the military element of national power in the execution of that strategy, particularly now during this time of relative peace and prosperity. If the width of this gap between society and the military becomes too great, the military runs the risk of losing the support and interest of the people. The services already have difficulties manning the force. The perceived low morale and readiness of the force was a presidential campaign issue. Closer

to home, in the case of the United States Army, an unattended gap will threaten Army Transformation, a process that needs funding and support from outside the Army over the next 15 to 20 years. Failure to incorporate needed capabilities for the future environment now during this time of peace and prosperity, will require the Army to change on the eve of the next war when the nation's perspective has narrowed and the Army's potential to change is limited by the press of time and the constraints of resources. Finally, a civil-military gap allowed to grow too large could eventually lead to the perception that the peacetime military is not an institution of society making it either expendable or not needed as currently configured.

In this study, I will analyze the gap, determining areas where it seems greatest. I will describe the gap between the military and the American people, showing its significance. I will finally make some recommendations on how senior Army (and perhaps all military) leaders can either narrow the gap or at least keep it from widening further.

PERCEPTIONS ON WHERE THE CIVIL-MILITARY GAP EXISTS

The civil-military gap is simply a metaphor signifying the important differences separating the military from the larger society.[3] The Triangle Institute for Security Studies set out to evaluate systematically this dynamic that has been analyzed primarily in an anecdotal fashion in the popular press. This forum involved more than two dozen scholars drawn from the academy, the military, and the national security policy community, surveying some 4891 respondents across several key subgroups: active and reserve component elite military officers; civilian elites, both with and without military service; and the mass public, both with and without military service. In October 1999, it released its findings as "The Project on the Gap Between the Military and Civilian Society."[4] Several of its findings are discussed within this paper. Findings from military officer respondents include:

- they have abandoned political neutrality, becoming partisan Republicans by a margin of 8 to 1 over Democrats, while the elite civilians and the mass public are about evenly split between the two parties;
- they are more likely to identify themselves as more conservative than civilian society;
- they are fairly critical of the quality of the political institutions' leadership, believing they are ignorant of military affairs and don't share the same values as the American people;
- they believe Americans in the national political elite are losing a personal connection to the military;
- they believe most people can be trusted;
- they are hostile to the media;

- they are more supportive of gender equality in the military than the general public except for women having a direct role in combat;
- they believe it has done what it should in dealing with sexual harassment, while elite civilians believe the military hasn't done enough;
- they strongly oppose gays and lesbians openly serving in the military;
- they express great pessimism about the moral health of society, believing that it could help society be more moral if the civilians adopted the military's values and behaviors;

Findings from civilian elite respondents include:

- they share the military's pessimism of society, but do not believe the military has a role in moral reform;
- they strongly support women serving in all combat jobs as well as for gays and lesbians openly serving in the military;
- they believe most people can be trusted;

Findings from the mass public respondents include:

- they strongly support women serving in all combat jobs as well as for gays and lesbians openly serving in the military;
- they believe you can't be too careful in dealing with people;

Findings from all respondents include:

- they believe there is mutual respect between the military and society, but it rests on an underlying alienation—that is, negative stereotypes that civilians hold about the military and that the military holds about civilians. Such tenuous respect may erode in time;
- they believe there is consensus on many of the foreign policy issues that were contentious during the Cold War, on the relative efficiency of military and non-military tools in addressing threats to national security, and that the "social engineering role" of "redressing historical discrimination" is not the role for the military.

While there are many perceptions on the precise issues defining the civil-military gap, this study will consider only a few: geographical and demographic differences, politicization of the military, and the disconnects between society's views of the military and the military's views of society. These perceptions contribute to the view that the military is less reflective of the society it serves.

A geographic gap has developed as a result of the downsizing of the military. Common sense tells us that a smaller military with fewer bases and reduced presence means a smaller military footprint, with fewer connections with U.S. families and communities. The location of these fewer bases figure prominently in regional accessions to the military. Beginning in the mid- 1980s, representation within the services for the northern states dropped while the southern presence increased to a point that as of the year 2000, the South is over represented by about eight percent in enlisted accessions each year.[5] The military has a much greater presence in the South than elsewhere. In 1996, only 15.4 percent of the U.S. population resided in the South, but 31.5 percent of the military personnel were Southerners.[6]

Another factor that has developed is that these fewer bases are becoming increasingly more comfortable due to quality of life and well being initiatives promoted by the military services in an effort to retain a quality force. Shopping facilities, restaurants, recreation facilities, and other services that cater to their specific needs and lifestyle are available to military personnel and their family members right on the base. Further, this comfort level is removing the military from the crime, costs, and other problematic aspects of life in the civilian community.[7] This condition, if it persists, will further isolate the military from the civilian community, causing more friction between the two, and a widening of the gap. Yet it may also attract civilians in the proximity to join the military!

The demographic gap manifests itself in several ways. Some have reported that the military is tending to recruit from a narrower segment of the population today than in the past, with more entrants coming from military families and with service academies providing a larger portion of the officer corps.[8] The officer corps is disproportionately male, white, Catholic, and highly educated.[9] Both of these trends contribute to a reduced diversity within the military. The end of the draft is seen as the major contributor to this demographic gap. The end of the draft has also caused an additional problem: It has made the all-volunteer force a type of "economic draft," resulting in disproportionate enlistments of the sons and daughters of the poor working class and people of color,[10] thereby creating a separate enlisted military caste of underclass career professionals, thereby estranging the military from other influential sectors of society.[11]

This demographic gap is accompanied by the experience gap:

> At the basic level of experience, which shapes values, attitudes, opinions, and perspective, the gap between the U.S. military and civilian society is growing. As we leave the 20th century, the number of people who have served in the military or have other personal connections with the military is declining. This "experience gap" is an artifact; the shrinking of the all-volunteer force and the passing of World War II and Korea generations that, through personal experience, enjoyed such extensive ties to the U.S. armed forces.[12]

The manifestation of the experience gap that most concerns members of the military is among lawmakers with military experience. The number of veterans in Congress has been declining since the 91st Congress (1969-70) when there were 389 members (about 73 percent) with military service.[13] Combine this with the fact that the percentage of veterans in Congress since the mid-1990s has dropped below that of the population at large.[14] The 105th Congress had 140 veterans among its membership; the 106th Congress had 137 veterans. The 107th Congress sworn in this past January 2001 will have three fewer military veterans than the 106th Congress had. The percentage of veterans works out to be about 25 percent of both houses (134 of 535 members),[15] as compared to six percent of the population at large with military service.[16] And while congressional voting patterns have not yet been affected, further reductions of veteran representation will diminish congressional understanding of the military and may affect agenda setting and support.[17]

Much has been written and discussed about the perceived politicization of the military, especially with the controversy surrounding the impact of the military vote in the year 2000 United States presidential election adding fuel to the fire.[18] To be sure, there is evidence that the Republican Party is overwhelmingly the party of choice for military officers, attracting more conservative and Republican elements of civilian society and appealing to fewer more liberal and Democratic Party segments.[19] Over the past three decades, contributing factors to this phenomenon include fallout from the Democratic Party opposition to the Vietnam War; Democrats abandoning the military and Republicans embracing it; the perception of a weak military and weak United States under Democratic President Jimmy Carter; Democratic Party opposition to the Reagan era military build up and the Gulf War; Democratic President Bill Clinton's sexual misconduct and impeachment, and his support of open homosexuality in the ranks, and Democratic Party Presidential candidate Al Gore's vocal support of President Clinton.[20] As a result, the Republican Party appears to service members to be more supportive of the military. The gap can widen if, as in this case, the preponderance of society supports the Democratic Party. In the Presidential 2000 election, the Democratic Party candidate won the popular vote. What kind of tension could exist between this segment of society and a perceived Republican military? If the President and/or the majority of the Congress were members of the Democratic Party, how much faith would the American people have that an ideologically Republican military would carry out its assigned missions? This political and ideological gap contributes significantly to the overall civil-military gap. It could contribute greatly to civilian skepticism concerning the military's role and welfare.

Another aspect of the politicization of the military is seen in the increased political savvy and competence of the officer corps as part of its professional development. The argument is that this condition may have helped make the military a too powerful and/or influential force in our national security decision making process. Military members may be more politically active and more willing to criticize the civilian leadership.[21] Further, such access to power may encourage military officers to protect the military's interests by engaging in partisan politics. This activism is contrary to what the people expect from their military:

> The people seem to share with civilian officials the expectation that the military provide operational competence and sound advice . . . Thus given to more-or-less blind trust in those who profess to serve them, the people therefore also implicitly ask that their military maintain strict political neutrality—distancing itself from partisan politics, staying out of domestic affairs.[22]

These expectations are sound, since they echo the same concerns our founding fathers had regarding large standing armies and the potential for their dominance over the people they are supposed to serve. Military professionalism should encourage military officers to "stay in their lanes" and out of politics during their tenure of military service.

Ideological norms figure prominently in a discussion of the civil-military gap. Samuel Huntington believes that in a democracy, the military is embedded in our democratic political system, and that the military profession must have a firm understanding that it must recognize both the functional and societal imperatives of that system.[23] The functional imperatives stem from the threats to society's security; the societal imperatives arise from social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant within the society. In this system, the military must defend the nation and a society that advocates democratic rule and governmental guarantees of individual rights and civil liberties. The tension created in the balancing of these imperatives is a manifestation of the civil-military gap. In the end, however, Huntington sees merit in the military ideology,

> Upon the soldiers, the defenders of order, rests a heavy responsibility. The greatest service they can render is to remain true to themselves, to serve with silence and courage in the military way. If they abjure the military spirit, they destroy themselves first and their nation ultimately. If the civilians permit the soldiers to adhere to the military standard, the nations themselves may eventually find the redemption and security in making that standard their own.[24]

An example of this tension is seen in a 21st century America characterized by a society sharply divided and its culture considerably unsettled. More importantly, those forces of cultural change in society that promote multiculturalism and diversity, individualism and the politics of gender and sexual orientation run counter to traditional military institutions and the military

profession.[25] Those who believe in moderate political change and social improvement by government action want to tear down old boundaries and abandon formerly esteemed distinctions. They question why it is necessary for the military to continue with its methods and traditions that set it apart from the society it serves. Some civilian elites, loudly calling for the military to quit dragging its heels on the leading social issues of the day, engage in "culture cracking" – subjecting military folkways to ridicule, harassing the armed services to submit to the dictates of political and cultural fashion.[26] The critics of "culture crackers" say they rarely have any military experience. Therefore they can neither empathize nor sympathize with the military's claim their ethos and values contribute to their effectiveness.

An example of balancing the tension is seen where the military has adapted to some changes in American society, developing a deeply felt moral presence by assuming a public role in addressing a variety of societal problems including racism, drug abuse, and expanding opportunities for women. In fact, the military, and the United States Army in particular, has been documented as a model of decency in race relations and has curbed, if not eliminated, its most humiliating gender practices.[27] Having achieved racial and gender integration, it has also managed to retain a moral and social legitimacy while maintaining its effectiveness in battle and in operations other than war.

All these actions should contribute to narrowing the gap, but have not escaped criticism. Despite these social achievements, A.J. Bacevich, executive director of the Foreign Policy Institute at the Johns Hopkins University's Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, does not believe the military should serve as society's sociological proving grounds,

> In many respects, the army and the other armed services are indeed noble and admirable institutions. Yet when they entertain fantasies of serving as agents of moral renewal, soldiers stray into areas that should remain strictly out of bounds. Armies preserve their nobility by serving as effective instruments of policy, leaving to others the task of social transformation.[28]

Nonetheless, if the military can maintain its combat effectiveness while successfully incorporating some of society's expectations, the accommodation should pay dividends in narrowing the civil-military gap.

No matter which issues seem to be separating our military from the civilian population, the causes of this perceived gap are generally the same and always interrelated. The effects of military downsizing contributed to the geographic and demographic perceptions. The end of the draft contributed to the steady expansion of the experience gap, and in part, to a lack of diversity in the military. Societal imperatives of 21st century America require that the military reform. But most of those trying to reform the military have little or no military experience.

Regardless of the number, source or reason for the perceptions, it is important that we recognize and acknowledge them and the tensions they create.

THE GAP AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE CIVIL-MILITARY GAP

There is a long history of tension between our armed forces and the larger society they serve and defend. Even prior to the Revolutionary War, our founding fathers were leery of standing armies in peacetime. They knew that European armies were separate from society, possessed the means of coercing the population, brought their own leaders to power, or simply ruled by force. Some argue that our constitutional tension between the military and civilian leadership is good, as it may be beneficial to military readiness and effectiveness.[29] For example, Samuel Huntington notes that after the Civil War, there was a "complete, unrelenting hostility of virtually all the American community toward virtually all things military."[30] Calling it "The Army's Dark Ages" and the "Period of Naval Stagnation," this very isolation, neglect and rejection by society and its leaders, made these same years the most fertile, creative, and formative in the history of the American armed forces.

It was during this time that the officer corps developed a distinctive professional character and produced the institutions and ideals of the American military profession. The high standards of that professionalism would pay America and its military dividends during World Wars I and II. Huntington concludes, "The isolation of our military was a prerequisite to professionalism, and peace was a prerequisite to isolation."[31] In his book, On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War, Harry Summers examines how similar circumstances following the Vietnam War created a "renaissance" in the military, which passed almost unnoticed in the larger community, radically transformed the American way of war.[32] This renaissance began at the Naval War College in 1972, concentrating on getting the Navy's intellectual house in order. But a reexamination of fundamentals in military theory and doctrine swept through all four services, producing many professional, ideological and technological changes on how the military would achieve success both on and off the battlefield. This in part contributed to America's stunning success during the Gulf War that demonstrated that the United States military was without peer.

A.J. Bacevich suggests another potential benefit of the gap. He notes that traditional military professionalism, rooted in the ideal of the warrior as the embodiment of soldierly virtue, is anachronistic.[33] The military is undemocratic, hierarchal, and quasi-socialistic, prizing order, routine, and predictability. It emphasizes the group over the individual. It values self-sacrifice,

self-denial, and physical courage. These traits put it at odds with American society. Yet he argues that this distinctive identity and accompanying values might contribute to the military's effectiveness. "To be sure, for a military organization to survive and be effective, it must retain an irreducible core of difference from civilian society."[34] The bottom line here is that there will always be a gap between the military and the society it serves. What we should be concerned with is the degree or width and depth of this gap, and the issues that contribute to the gap, and its consequences.

Despite the inevitability of a civil-military gap, there are those who currently see a crisis in the deepening gulf. One observer contends that since 1991 incidents in the military of sexual misconduct and harassment, security and intelligence lapses, safety and equipment failures, racism and hate crimes perpetrated by its members, alleged Pentagon withholding and distorting information concerning the exposure of thousands of its members to depleted uranium munitions and chemical agents during the Persian Gulf War, and other breaches of public trust "typify a military institution that is seriously diseased."[35] Another believes that the relationship between the United States military and American society "clamors for attention."[36] While not proclaiming a crisis, the Triangle Institute for Security Studies found that the gap and tensions related to it are real, concluding that they may have serious and lasting consequences for United States national security—consequences that could shackle future administrations.[37] This latter concern was echoed by Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen's 1997 remarks at Yale University:

> ...one of the challenges for me is to somehow prevent a chasm from developing between the military and civilian worlds, where the civilian world doesn't fully grasp the mission of the military, and the military doesn't understand why the memories of our citizens and civilian policy makers are so short, or why the criticism is so quick and unrelenting.[38]

WHY THE GAP IS IMPORTANT

In his classic study of strategy, Carl von Clausewitz paid considerable attention to the civil-military gap. In his seminal work On War, he describes war as a "paradoxical trinity," composed of the people, the commander and his army, and the government. He describes the role for each member of the trinity in the conduct of war:

> The passions that are to be kindled in war must already be inherent in the people; the scope which the play of courage and talent will enjoy in the realm of probability and chance depends on the particular character of the commander and the army; but the political aims are the business of government alone.[39]

Clausewitz argues that the nation must maintain a balance between the three, for to ignore any one of them "would conflict with reality to such an extent that for this reason alone, it would be totally useless."[40] One hundred and fifty years later, Summers would apply Clausewitz's theory to his analysis of the Vietnam War. In his examination of the relationship between the United States Army and the American people, Summers emphasizes how public support must be an essential part of strategic planning.[41] He uses another Clausewitzian metaphor to examine the lack of American public support for the Vietnam War – friction,

> Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult. The difficulties accumulate and end by producing a kind of friction that is inconceivable unless one has experienced war. . .Countless minor incidents—the kind you can never really forsee—combine to lower the general level of performance, so that one always falls short of the intended goal. . .Friction is the only concept that more or less corresponds to the factors that distinguish real war from war on paper.[42]

The gap between the American people and its military created the friction that Summers finds most significant in his analysis of the Vietnam War. He cites student draft deferments (those who could afford college, the upper middle class and elite of society, did not serve; so the lower middle class and poor fought the war) and downplaying battlefield casualties/realities (which backfired when the press brought the war into American living rooms) as catalysts for a gap, which led to public distrust and disgust of the military. As the war went on, this gap became very wide and deep. It was a contributing factor in causing the American people to withdraw their support for the war and ostracize those who fought it.

In November 1984, Clausewitz's "trinity" would surface into American strategic doctrine in what today is called the "Weinberger Doctrine." Speaking before the National Press Club on the uses of military power, President Reagan's Secretary of Defense, Caspar W. Weinberger, articulated his six preconditions for commitment of United States military forces. Among the preconditions was his conviction that "before the United States commits combat forces broad, there must be some reasonable assurance we will have the support of the American people and their elected representatives in Congress."[43] Secretary Weinberger thus contributed to the "renaissance" Summers referred to. In so doing, he set the stage for the military success of in the Gulf War.

In this 1991 war, many military leaders had served in Vietnam and were architects of the aforementioned "renaissance" that occurred in the military between 1973 and 1991. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Army General Colin Powell, was one of the key leaders. While a student at the National War College from 1974 – 1975, he had the opportunity to analyze his experiences in Vietnam within the context of Clausewitzian theory, just as Summers

had. The dynamics of the "trinity" were blatantly obvious. The government must set the political aim of a war, the commander and his army must achieve those aims, and the people must support both the political aims and the army's role in achieving those aims. Powell says it best:

> Since they *(the people)* supply the treasure and the sons, and today the daughters too, they must be convinced the sacrifice is justified. That essential pillar had crumbled as the Vietnam War ground on. Clausewitz's greatest lesson for my profession was that the soldier, for all his patriotism, valor, and skill, forms just one leg of the triad. Without all three legs engaged, the military, the government, and the people, the enterprise cannot stand. [44]

During the Persian Gulf War, one thing did not change from the Vietnam War. The War was brought live and in living color to the living rooms, school rooms, board rooms, bar rooms, and bedrooms of the American people. During the first days of the war, the media's coverage created what General Powell called a "euphoria"—victory was at hand, and the end would come soon. When the war was not over in the next few days, the mood changed from euphoria to a funk. General Powell recognized a dilemma, perhaps recalling the depths of the civil-military gap that materialized as a result of the Vietnam War: "At this point, the American people had seen on television only staff briefings out of Saudi Arabia and the Pentagon. So far, no senior administration official had explained how the war was going. Somebody should be doing that."[45] So on 23 January 1991, General Powell shared with the American people (and the world, to include Saddam Hussein) the battle plan for Desert Storm. Key to the briefing were the two now infamous sentences he used that would become the banner headlines of television, radio, and print media the next day: "Our strategy in going after this army is very simple. First we are going to cut it off, and then we are going to kill it."[46] About a month later, on 27 February 1991, the Commander in Chief of Central Command, General H. Norman Schwartzkopf, took time out from his duties of prosecuting the war to give a detailed press briefing explaining the strategy behind Desert Storm to the American people—and the world.

Clearly General Powell felt confident that he had the support of the American people to prosecute this war: He cited a survey where 80 percent of Americans polled thought press coverage of the Persian Gulf War had been good or excellent.[47] It is no wonder the United States military enjoyed the admiration of the American people, something unseen since the end of World War II.

THE CIVIL-MILITARY GAP AND ARMY TRANSFORMATION

The examples of the wars in Vietnam and the Persian Gulf illustrate how the civil-military gap help shape the vital role of public support of the army during times of conflict. But what

impact could the gap have on support of the military in the absence of conflict? History shows that U.S. leaders, with the support of the people dismantle the military after a major war, leading to its isolation and even neglect. Further, there appears to be no potential major conflict for the next twenty years. Consequently, U.S. military leaders want to use this period of non-conflict to "transform our military." The Chief of Staff of the Army, General Erick K. Shinseki, wants to transform the United States Army into a force capable of dominating at every point of the spectrum of operations, creating a force that is more responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable, and sustainable than the victorious force of Desert Storm. His efforts, while visionary, are daunting and daring.

General Shinseki bases his vision on, America's First Battles: 1776 – 1965, Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft's volume of essays about our nation's first combat encounters in each of our wars. These essays depict a history of the poor U.S. record of preparedness for war, citing as the chief reason: complacency in times of peace—the inter-war years. So this time of relative peace, unrivaled economic prosperity, and the breakneck pace of technological progress, the Chief of Staff of the Army is attempting to break this cycle of unpreparedness. Yet he is keenly aware that the support of the American people for their military, jeopardized by the depth and breadth of the civil-military gap, may make or break his efforts:

> Most Americans do not relate our political and economic strength to our military prowess...Americans typically do not establish a link between our national prosperity and our military excellence. That kind of complacency has led to early disaster in past wars. We, *as a nation*, must ensure that the next chapter of America's First Battles will recount how we learned the lessons of our past and applied them with wisdom and foresight to the future.[48]

As the services pursue their transformation goals, the civil-military gap could affect the services' ability to man their forces. In the late 1990s, the Army and Navy fell short of recruiting goals by as much as ten percent and were forced to start accepting non-high school graduates.[49] The Department of Defense has noted a trend of accession mission failure from the summer of 1997 through the spring of 1999, finishing Fiscal Year 1999 at 98.4 percent of its objectives, with two services failing to recruit enough members to fill their ranks. The Army failed to meet its Fiscal Year 1998 goals in both the active and reserve components. In Fiscal Year 1999, only the Army National Guard exceeded its goal, but the active component fell about 6300 soldiers short and the Army Reserve about 10,300 short of their respective goals. In Fiscal Year 2000, the Army just met its recruiting goal of 80,000 soldiers (enlisting number 80,000 on 28 September, two days before the end of the fiscal year) in the active, guard, and reserve components. This occurred after slightly lowering standards and significantly

restructuring pay and bonuses to increase accessions. Looking back over the results of these last three years, there could not be a better indicator of the willingness of American society to support its Army than the degree to which its sons and daughters decide to join for a period of personal service.[50]

THE CIVIL-MILITARY GAP AND RECRUITING

These numbers and subsequent challenges for manning the force are not lost on the United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC). To be effective, this organization must strategically navigate the civil-military gap to find and/or build bridges to unite both sides. Their focus on the gap is evident in their recruitment strategy. In developing its strategic approach to man the Army of the future, the command has analyzed international geopolitical trends, warfighting trends and resource implications, along with domestic trends. In its analysis of domestic trends, one of the command's considerations is "Civil Military Relations – A Widening Gap." Challenges identified include social bifurcation, citing six percent of Americans with military experience; "politicization" of the officer corps; and a decline of the modern "Citizen Soldier" in the active component as a result of downsizing. (A citizen-soldier is defined as an individual who enlists in the military, serves his/her initial tour honorably, and returns to a civilian status to be a productive member of American society.[51]) This analysis led to crafting of special enlistment options, primarily guaranteeing continuing education, to appeal to today's young Americans. The potential impacts of these programs include benefits not just for the individual and the Army, but also for high schools, colleges, private industry, and local communities. The study argues that communities and society will be better off with the restoration of the citizen soldier track, while accommodating, but not totally dependent upon, National Service themes.[52]

USAREC's attention to the civil-military gap is also addressed in the education of the recruiter—the point man or woman for the Army with the American people. The recruiter is potentially the only direct contact most American people experience with a serving member of the Armed Forces in their entire lives. In the current draft revision of USAREC Manual 100 – 5, Recruiting Operations, Chapter 2 discusses the working environment of an Army Recruiter. The recruiter serves at the "confluence of the people, the federal government, and the military."[53] This description echoes Clausewitz's concept of the remarkable trinity, emphasizing the importance of the resulting dynamics on the recruiting effort. USAREC should be commended

for providing a theoretical basis and perspective to guide recruiters as they try to bridge the civil-military gap.

Despite such efforts, some analysts continue to scoff that the civil-military gap is really much ado about nothing. These critics base their skepticism on public opinion polls which reveal that most American civilians hold the military in high esteem today. Among younger American adults especially, the military and the people who run it are respected and admired. As far as societal institutions are concerned, the public displays more confidence in the military than any other institution.[54] But as evidenced in the discussion of manning the force, high approval ratings do not necessarily lead to enthusiasm among young Americans for joining the military. Additionally, some critics see too much popular support of the military as potentially dangerous, as it could indicate a lack of knowledge about the military and overconfidence in its capabilities that could backfire through unrealistic expectations.[55]

Particularly revealing is the fact that interviews with potential Army recruits indicate that they get their impressions about military life from movies and television, friends their age, older friends, and/or a family member.[56] But movies are seldom realistic, and friends their own age are as uninformed as they are about the military. Older friends and family members, for the most part, probably are not part of the six percent of the American people with any military service. A big part of the challenge is to educate potential recruits on the realities of military service. So it is no wonder that the recruiting challenge is so daunting. The civil-military gap is looming as a powerful force to be reckoned with. We must continue to explore the discussions and ramifications of the gap in order to sustain our military superiority and to recruit significant soldiers to keep the force intact.

Psychologists define perception as ". . . impressions of events . . . derived from past expressions and serving as a basis for . . . motivated action."[57] This definition implies that perceptions are not easily changed, especially since the powers of our past experiences are very strong. As a result, perceptions become truths until they are proven otherwise. Therefore, recommendations for changing perceptions must focus on providing new, positive experiences for the person or people you want to change. To narrow the civil-military gap, there must be positive contact between the military and the people it serves.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO NARROW THE CIVIL-MILITARY GAP

Understanding the dynamics of the civil-military gap is important in order to try and narrow the gap. The impact of this effort takes on greater importance when one realizes that when it

comes to carrying out our National Security Strategy, the most troublesome tasks will inevitably fall to soldiers. They must be set up to succeed in accomplishing these tasks.

> As civilian elites awaken to that fact, they may come to recognize the utility of nurturing values within the ranks that are conducive to toughness, discipline, and cohesion—and that provide, not so incidentally, a firewall against praetorian inclinations. Such enlightened attitudes might provide the basis for a new compact between the military and civilian elites, delineating in a way acceptable to both the responsibilities that soldiers will undertake and the prerogatives that they will enjoy. Negotiating the terms of such a compact will demand concessions from both sides. Almost inevitably, it will require a reformation of the warrior's calling, adapting and updating its externals in order to preserve its essentials.[58]

The responsibility for negotiating the compact that A.J. Bacevich recommends is shared among the three members of Clausewitz's trinity – the government, the military, and the people. No one voice should be heard above the others, but all must participate. All must reach out to each other in an effort of honest debate and effective listening to determine roles for and expectations of each party. The recommendations made here, however, are limited to those that the military member of the triad can observe as a leader in narrowing the civil- military gap.

First and foremost, all members of the military must develop a better understanding of American society, its culture, and the American tradition of civil-military relations. Basic subjects military members should understand include the constitutional basis for the military and the associated civilian control, the relationship of the military with the government and the society it serves (Clausewitz and Summers), and the military's role in and interaction with society (Huntington and Janowitz). This education process should not be limited to the instruction received at the war colleges, service academies, or within the curriculum of our other sources of officer accessions and commissioning.[59] Our soldiers will bear the burden to perform the requisite tasks to keep the United States atop the world order. As former Army Chief of Staff, Dennis J. Reimer observed, "Soldiers are our credentials." Therefore this kind of education should be incorporated into our enlisted members' education programs. It should not be limited to certain specialties like recruiters; it is applicable to all who serve. Initial training could be conducted just prior to completion of advanced individual training courses. Once all members are familiarized with the basic concepts and their particular role and responsibilities as a member of the trinity, sustainment training should follow. Options for executing this training are many. It could be incorporated as a discussion theme for Army (or the other services' equivalent) Consideration of Others (CO2) and/or Values training, as a topic for promotion boards and tests, or as training upon promotion or reenlistment. This training should also be a prerequisite for honorable separation from the service. In this regard, the training would cover

the expectations society will have on the separating service member as a modern "citizen-soldier," informing the departing soldiers about the significance of their military experience in what they say and how they conduct their lives as veterans. While we cannot control their thoughts, words, or deeds once they depart the military and become civilians, a parting orientation on the subject as they enter the civilian world can be fruitful, especially among those who are proud of their service to their nation.

Another recommendation is to make our service men and women more visible within the larger community. Again, this responsibility should not be limited to recruiters or Reserve Officer Training Corps instructors, or members of the Reserve Component. It is my experience that many military organizations—active, reserve and national guard – effectively engage with the civilian communities outside the gates of their installations and armories, either formally (commander or leader initiatives/programs) or informally (military members serving as scout leaders, church leaders, school board members, youth sports coaches and officials, etc., in civilian based organizations). These efforts are admirable, worthwhile, and need to continue. Nonetheless, there are large segments of the population that still have no contact at all with the military.

There are several programs currently in effect that try to connect the people with their military personnel. The Hometown News Service, a dual service, Army and Air Force organization, is a low cost program that provides a morale boost to soldiers and airmen by getting their accomplishments and accolades highlighted in front of family and friends back home. It also focuses on grassroots support for the military—one community at a time. It blankets the United States and its territories with print, audio, and video releases to 11,000 daily and weekly newspapers, over 2,000 radio stations, and more than 1,000 television stations for a total of over 750,000 releases a year.[60] While the intent of the program is admirable, its effectiveness in influencing other than the service member's family or close friends is hard to determine.[61] Still, because it is an inexpensive and positive program for the service member and their families, it should continue, supported by the command attention of military leaders to ensure prompt and accurate submissions.

Many professional organizations promote the military. Organizations like the Association for the United States Army and the Retired Officers Association serve admirably to tell the story of the military. But while these organizations are capable of influencing all sectors of our society, they are truly more effective, and appear to focus their efforts more toward influencing the civilian elite, particularly corporate America and our elected representatives in state and federal

government. Undoubtedly, these are important allies for the United States military. But does their message reach the public at large?

The Strategic Studies Institute at the Army War College first published Summers' classic study, On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War in 1981. This work was widely read within the military community, stimulating great discussion. In 1984, Dell Publishing Company reprinted the book in a paperback edition as "the means for this analysis to reach a wider public audience."[62] His second book, On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War was published and released by Dell Publishing in 1992, "so that Americans can 'know the instrument they mean to use' to provide for their security and protection in what continues to be a most dangerous and uncertain world."[63] These books discuss and analyze important issues in the interplay of the members of Clausewitz's trinity, and should be on the reading list for all political science, government studies, and sociology students. But are such enlightened works reaching society at large?

It is a fact that in our high-tech society, the media can influence the general public's view on just about any issue. Concerning the matter of influencing young Americans to volunteer for military service, we have noted that today's youth cite the media as their #1 source for impressions of the military. So it is imperative that the military continue to seek ways to leverage the media to tell its story in a balanced, yet positive way. Contrary to views widely held among the elite military officers, the major daily newspapers do not emphasize negative stories about the military. The ratio of positive to negative is roughly 2:1; coverage of the military by military publications is even more positive.[64] The popular media, primarily fiction and film, reinforce diverse stereotypes about military and civilian society, with an especially critical view of the military portrayed in "high brow" fiction and film.[65] Military public affairs personnel must continue to work with the print and television news media to maintain a relationship of honesty and candor in order to continue their generally positive portrayal of the military. Public affairs personnel must also continue to engage the popular media in an effort to get a more fair and balanced portrayal of the military and its influence and interaction in civilian society. The impact the media has on the perception of the civil-military gap should also be addressed in the aforementioned educational programs for military personnel.

In the 1970's, United Airlines ran a television commercial that dramatized this challenge. Ben, the president of a successful business, called together all his sales representatives and other key leaders in the company. He stated that he received a call from 'an old friend' who he had not seen or talked to for awhile, but who had been doing business with his company since its inception. The friend called to say that he was going to start doing business with another

company, telling Ben that, "Your company just isn't giving us what we want." Ben then hands everyone a plane ticket—on United Airlines, or course. When asked what the tickets were for, Ben admonished them, saying, "If we're not giving my friend what he wants, what about our other clients?" He tells the assembled group they are to go see every client, talk to them, look them in the eye, and confirm their company's commitment to them. After issuing all the tickets, there was one left. "Where are you going, Ben?" a salesman asked. Ben replied, "I'm going to see 'an old friend'."

The challenge is for America and her service members to look each other in the eye and reconnect. Giving every service member a plane ticket for some point on the American map is certainly too costly and not entirely feasible. But leaders must find innovative ways to reconnect in peacetime with the American people. The military should not just rely on public affairs programs, professional organizations, or soldier authors to promote its cause. Service members must engage society, just as Ben directed his staff to re-connect with their company's clients.

In his 4 August 2000 address to the Army War College class, Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki directed each Army student to speak to an outside civilian organization prior to 9 June 2001, making this requirement a prerequisite for graduation. Since that time, Army students have hit the road, speaking at high schools and universities, church gatherings, civic organizations, and other groups of Americans across the country. They are speaking to the citizens about Army issues, challenges, and experiences, and answering their questions.[66] While the effect of this initiative is not yet known, response from the students has been positive—and from some, invigorating. This is just one example of how soldiers can take the initiative in re-connecting with the American public. While I do not suggest that each and every service member be required to speak in public, certainly those in the enlisted pay grades of E7 to E9, warrant officer grades W2 to W5, and commissioned officer grades O3 (promotable) and above have the requisite military experience to speak credibly and effectively with the public. The military should not wait until society truly isolates itself from the military as history has shown tends to happen in the periods of peace. It should stay engaged with the American public and work to remain relevant for society at all times.

There are also several recommendations that may have potential for narrowing the geographic, demographic and experience gaps. Establishing recruiting goals to more accurately reflect geographic diversity is one strategy. For example, each of the five current Army recruiting brigades and the OCONUS stations would receive recruiting goals that would balance the geographic representation of the force. Areas that are needed to achieve that

balance, but are harder to recruit from, may be given special incentive tools to entice potential recruits from that specific area. These incentives may include cash bonuses, short-term enlistments, duty locations of choice, a skill of choice, or any combination of these incentives. These goals and the incentives available to meet them would be adjusted periodically to sustain the proper geographic representation.

To address the demographics of the officer corps, the services should adjust the accessions from their commissioning sources—the service academies, ROTC, and enlisted soldier officer candidate schools (OCS). In this way, services can introduce demographic diversity in the military leadership that is reflective of the society it serves. As with the geographic recruiting goals, officer accession sources would be adjusted periodically to manage the requisite representation desired. For the Army in FY 01, ROTC produced 54 percent of the officers accessed, OCS and West Point produced 24 and 22 per cent respectively.[67] But there are several challenges in this regard. In the case of the Army, federal law constrains the number of cadets enrolled at West Point. Cadet attrition rates consequently require Army ROTC and OCS to fill the remaining accessions for the Army. Federal law also requires officers to have a bachelor's degree before promotion to the grade of O-3 (Army Captain). To facilitate success for these officers, the Army set a requirement of 90 college credit hours for OCS candidates.[68] This has significantly limited the number of qualified enlisted soldiers who can apply. So ROTC must fill the remaining delta, which should provide for greater diversity of the officer corps. But this means that Army ROTC programs must be robust and find creative ways to attract students and reduce attrition without sacrificing standards. This is one area, officer accession, where the ways and means to achieve the ends are still elusive.

Senior military leaders, particularly base and installation commanders should take the lead to narrow, or at least bridge the experience gap among our elected representatives and their staffs. All newly elected officials should be invited to visit military facilities within their state or congressional district as soon as possible after election. Upon completion of the visit, they should then be invited to participate in special military events throughout the succeeding years. In addition to orienting these officials to the military missions, capabilities, and lifestyle on the base/installation, special attention should also focus on the contributions the military and their family members make within the adjacent communities outside the gates. There is nothing to prevent senior leaders from including other members of the civilian society, elite or otherwise, from these special visits, either in combination with the elected official's orientation or as separate visits.

Further, we need to change the perception of a politicized military. The potential for polarization of the public along partisan lines will only widen the gap. The people of the United States place special trust and confidence in its military leaders to carry out assigned missions no matter who is in charge or in elected office. The military should not be seen as another interest group for politicians to woo; it would be viewed more favorably if it remained apolitical. Military leaders must set the example for their subordinates in this regard, both publicly, but more importantly, in private by refraining from endorsing or badmouthing a particular political party's ideology. Issues should be debated on their merits, not by which party presents them. Military leaders must avoid stereotyping political leaders, their parties, and their followers if they wish not to be stereotyped as well. If there is a political party that may be more hospitable to the military profession, military leaders must take the lead to build bridges to a broader cross section of society whenever they can, in a bipartisan nature. Narrowing this perception of the civil-military gap may then make the military environment less threatening to some Americans and therefore, more appealing to young Americans, encouraging and fostering the geographic and demographic diversity the military and society wants and needs.

A final recommendation is to energize the "citizen-soldier" dynamic. As discussed earlier, there are two types of citizen soldier—the modern version who enlists, serves out his/her obligation, and returns to society, and the traditional version of the reserve component patriot or the drafted soldier who answers the call. Creating balanced, realistic, and positive experiences for both these great American types will certainly serve to narrow the civil-military gap.

The decline in the number of modern citizen-soldiers is a result of military downsizing. For the Army in particular, there have recently been fewer accessions with an increasingly higher first-term attrition rate. Not only have fewer Americans been coming into the Army, but a greater proportion were leaving the Army with a less than favorable experience to take back into society. Additionally, the Army has cut back on the number of short-term (two year) enlistment contracts. This means that fewer Americans had the opportunity to "cycle through" the Army experience.[69] Assuming that neither Congress nor the American people will support a return to the draft, the military should set a higher standard for its recruits and seriously hold its accessions to that standard, while increasing the number of short-term enlistment contracts. The purpose of recruiting to a higher standard is to improve the probability that more recruits will honorably complete their initial enlistment. More short-term contracts provide some flexibility for the services to meet their assigned end-strength goals and to allow more service members to cycle through the military experience. Additionally, it creates a pool of honorably discharged citizen-soldiers to fill the rolls of the Individual Ready Reserve, a force that will be key in the

event of total mobilization. The initiatives that the Army is currently using to recruit new members, particularly the partnerships with colleges, universities, and businesses, look promising and are a step in the right direction. Of course, the leaders in the field must be brought on board with and understand these strategies in order to support the desired end state. They must also have a strategy for retention of quality personnel beyond a first enlistment. These two strategies must be coordinated to ensure end strength goals can be met. These initiatives will undoubtedly require annual adjustments to accession and retention objectives.

Over the past few years, the role of the traditional citizen-soldier has received a lot of attention. While the military has downsized, there has been no apparent reduction in the use of the military element of power to execute the National Security Strategy. The associated high operational tempo was impacting negatively on combat readiness of active component units. In order to provide some relief, the reserve component is being called upon more and more. Reserve component Army units have been integrated into the Bosnia and Kosovo rotations. The vast majority of strategic and theater airlift has been assigned to reserve component Air Force units. The performance of our traditional citizen-soldiers and their units assigned to these missions has been outstanding, but generally unnoticed by the American public. These missions have provided tremendous opportunities for these Americans to experience things that the majority of their hometown neighbors only read about. This trend of using the reserve components should continue, with strong consideration given to increasing their role. The success of these citizen-soldiers is not just their responsibility; it is shared with the communities they come from. Employers, churches, civic groups, volunteer organizations and others in the community all share in the experience, the spectacular accomplishments, and the hardships of the citizen-soldier and have a vested interest in his/her success. The influence of these traditional citizen-soldiers can truly help narrow the civil-military gap in Hometown, USA.

THE FUTURE OF THE CIVIL-MILITARY GAP

The civil-military gap in the United States between the people and its armed forces is an American "institution," established with the founding of our nation. It is an important dynamic, for it "provides a barometer that enables us to measure the fitness of the United States to play the part of democratic superpower."[70] In fact, the civil military relationship in a democracy is almost invariably difficult. It sets up opposing values, held by powerful institutions with great resources, and inevitable tension between the members of Clausewitz's remarkable trinity. This study offers a discussion of the current gap, explaining why it exists and how it manifests itself. Recommendations have been provided on how to narrow the gap, but not on how to eliminate it.

It will not disappear from our environment, nor should we expect it to. But armed with an understanding of the dynamics of the civil-military gap, all participants in the debate for developing our National Security Strategy – the government, the military, and the people – can contribute to cogent and executable policies for the United States, fitting of our superpower status and democratic values.

WORD COUNT = 9,716

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